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The University of Southern Mississippi

Faculty Senate Meeting

May 4, 2007

Gulf Coast Campus - Holloway Complex

2:00 p.m.

Guest Presenters: Robert Bass and Pat Joachim – Pat Joachim gave an update on coast campus projects. Robert Bass gave an overview of how the land for the new campus was decided upon and the positive attributes of the location.

1.0 Call to order: 3:10pm

2.0 Minutes from Feb. and Apr. approved without changes.

3.0 Agenda approved with 2 changes – 4.1.5 Five Year Reflection moved to 7.0 Old Business; change 9.0 Adjournment to 9.0 Meeting Suspended Until June.

4.0 Officers' Reports

4.1 President

4.1.1 Promotion & Tenure Remands – Several faculty have contacted AAUP and Senate Executive Officers with concerns because their Promotion or Tenure dossiers were remanded by the provost even though they have received positive support from the departments, college councils and the university council. Some of the faculty also voiced concerns about the accurateness of the information cited by the provost in the remands. The large number of concerns prompted much discussion at the senate meeting. Senators questioned the ‘disconnect’ between the provost’s expectations and the peer review committees. To ascertain the facts in an effort to determine if there is a serious ‘disconnect,’ a motion was made and passed unanimously to send a request to the provost asking for the total number of P&T documents that went up and the total number that were sent back for remand.

4.1.2 Provost Councils – plural! (Summer Term Pay Rate and Enrollment, Sunguard and Online Courses, 2007/08 Raises) – Myron H. reported that the provost has indeed called several provost meetings in the last month and that they have been very helpful in terms of transition issues. The issue of raises was the topic at one meeting. Myron H. stated that the senate’s position was that raises should be cost of living or ‘base merit raise’ type raises. Following the meeting, Myron H. sent an email to the chairs, deans and the provost explaining why the senate thought a ‘base merit raise’ was appropriate and an example of how it might be accomplished. Myron H. also asked that whatever process

was used be transparent. The following week, faculty began to be asked for vitas and were told that the provost had sent instructions to the deans for determining raises. In an email letter, Myron H. asked the provost to share instructions given to the deans about the raises and asked deans to share with faculty the method that each intended to employ in their respective college. The provost did send the instructions to Myron H. but with a statement that “information about how each dean arrives at his or her recommendations for raises cannot and will not be provided to the Faculty Senate.” The instructions told deans that all raise recommendations to the provost were to be accompanied by each faculty members’ vita, annual evaluation and the FAR-lite form that he provided. (A senator pointed out that the FAR form stated that “failure to provide all required documentation may negate a merit raise.”)

Senators voiced concern that senate input concerning raises was again ignored by the administration and that the same micro-managing top-down method for giving raises was again being used. Senators expressed concern that chairs were being left out of the decision-making process and that the process given in the Faculty Handbook for determining raises (the departmental committee/chair and the annual evaluation) was being violated. After much discussion, a motion was passed unanimously to draft a letter to be sent to the provost expressing the senate’s opposition to the apparent violations of the Handbook and the spirit of Shared Governance in the decision-making process of the raise determinations.

4.1.3 University Planning Council – Myron H. had shared last week with senators (via the senate list) an email he sent Dr. Exline expressing concerns voiced to him by senate representatives of the University Planning Council. Myron H. summarized the email briefly and then deferred to Don Redalje, Bobby Middlebrooks and Cheri Becker, representatives, to elaborate on some of the concerns. They explained that the council members were given 68 requests worth \$29 million to rank in a week’s time. The form used to request consideration by the council is one page front side only and so does not give a lot of information concerning any of the initiatives. Further, they stated that many of the individuals on the council felt that they were not knowledgeable enough about many of these areas to make well-informed decisions concerning them. Lastly, they felt that much more planning, budgeting and the like regarding the initiatives could be done at a lower organizational level.

After much discussion, the senate unanimously passed a motion authorizing the Senate Exec. Committee to pen another letter to Dr. Exline expressing our appreciation of her effort in planning and her spirit of inclusiveness but also expressing our belief that the University Planning Council, as it stands right now in membership, organization, and process, is not functioning in the capacity necessary to accomplish its objectives and that the senate urges the administration to postpone further decision-making by the council until Dr. Saunders has time to review and weigh in on how she envisions the process should work.

4.1.4 Class Changes vs. “Substitutions” (CISE) – As an information-sharing item, Myron H. updated senators on the situation concerning CISE’s plan to ‘substitute’ classes in place of the Ed. Psych course now required in the curriculum. The interim dean of education did not feel that this change needed to go before Academic Council since it was a ‘substitution’ instead of ‘change.’ Academic Council will be taking up the issue at its meeting on Monday.

4.1.6 Election of Officers (Process) – Myron H. deferred to President-Elect Judd. Stephen J. stated that there is no current mechanism in place for finding senators to serve as officers. The process now has been that either the Exec. Officers have taken on that task or that nominations were simply taken from the floor on election day – this process did not give senators adequate time to consider the prospect. Stephen J. asked the senate to consider a mechanism for nominating officers – perhaps a nominating committee or perhaps allowing the Election Committee to take it on as a task. Gail

Russell suggested that the chairs of the other senate committees be a nominating committee. After some discussion, there was no general feeling one way or another and some suggested that we wait until next meeting to see if there was a problem getting nominations. It was felt that perhaps the reluctance to serve in the past was because of the current administration and that with a new administration, there would be no problem.

Myron H. asked that if anyone wanted to nominate someone or themselves before the next meeting, that they email the Exec. Officers or someone from the Elections Committee.

Myron H. informed senators that the Executive Officers met with Dr. Saunders that morning and that the meeting was very pleasant and informative – Dr. Saunders shared some of her thoughts and ideas and asked some very good questions and officers were able to do the same. Executive Officers invited Dr. Saunders to the senate retreat in August and she gladly accepted the invitation.

4.2 President-Elect

4.2.1 Update on ELR Inquiry – Stephen J. reported that the committee had finished gathering its initial information but that some items needed further clarification. But he believed that the committee would complete its work and have a report for next senate meeting.

4.2.2 Constitutional and Other Recommendations – The Executive Officers tightened up the suggested changes for the constitution and the recommendations for a search process manual and P&T grievance committee and distributed it to senators for review. The Constitution and By-laws and Governance Committees are charged with studying, editing, and/or refining the proposals and drafting recommendations for the senate.

4.3 Secretary

4.4 Secretary-Elect

5.0 Committee Reports – Updates from all Committees

5.1 Academic and Governance

5.2 Administration and Faculty Evaluations

5.3 Awards

5.4 Budget

5.5 Constitution and Bylaws

5.6 Faculty Welfare – Anita Davis reported that the Welfare Committee had met to develop a list of data that the committee would need to do its study on faculty pay. The list was sent to Dr. Exline who stated that Institutional Research and Human Resources would be happy to pull the information after completing some major projects that they were currently working on. Anita D. stated that she would send the list out on the senate list for all to see.

5.7 Government Relations

5.8 Technology – Barton Spencer reported that he had already received 71 responses to the Ocean survey. Bill Powell stated that he had confirmed with Homer that Ocean will be replaced and not done away with.

5.9 Elections

5.10 Other committee and liaison reports

5.10.1 President's Council

5.10.2 AAUP

5.10.3 Facility Management Planning Committee – Mary Beth Applin reported that the final version of the Facility Management Plan would be out soon. The committee was sent a draft version and they made a lengthy list of corrections and that as soon as the corrections were made, the company would be presenting the plan

5.10.4 Alternative Learning Committee – Bill Powell stated that the administration has backed away from its initial enrollment criteria for summer graduate courses and has developed a formula that depts can use that averages enrollments. This enables lower enrollment graduate classes to be offset by higher enrollment undergraduate classes.

5.10.5 Distance Education Committee

5.10.6 Faculty Handbook Committee

5.10.7 Committee on Advisement

5.10.8 Evaluation of Teaching

5.10.9 Academic/Graduate Council – Bobby Middlebrooks reported that the chair-elect (soon to be taking over) Charlie Sawyer, will be leaving for a semester and that Ann Blackwell will be taking over as new chair.

5.10.10 Ad Astra – Mary Beth Applin reported that the Astra Committee wrapped up its study of the scheduling issues and had developed 6 recommendations that, once finalized, would be shared with the senate and sent to the provost. The main recommendation was that the administration invest \$14,000 to purchase the web version of Astra that would give depts. more immediate access for scheduling purposes. In addition, the committee also recommends the development of an Astra web site that pulls together needed information from Physical Plant, the provost's page and the Registrar's page and combines it with other identified information.

6.0 New Business

6.1 Nominations of Officers – N/A

6.2 Graduate Student Funding – Graduate student stipends are going up; the number of graduate student positions is not changing but depts maybe gaining or losing some; graduate students will be provided with health insurance though they will have to pay a co-pay of at least \$500.

7.0 Old Business

4.1.5 Five Year Reflection - The senate went into closed session to discuss two personnel-related issues. When the senate returned to open session, the following motions were announced as being passed:

1) Senate voted unanimously to investigate a possible Faculty Handbook infraction concerning faculty welfare in the College of Health.

2) Senate voted in a secret ballot (by a margin of 29-5 and one abstention) to adopt a document that provides a brief legacy of the five years of the Thames administration. The document was sent to committee for editing and will be included as an Appendix to these minutes and included on the senate web site.

8.0 Other

9.0 May meeting was suspended until June 9th.

Members present and those absent [in brackets] but represented by proxy (in parentheses):

College of the Arts & Letters

Anita Davis

[Cheryl Goggin] (Amy Young)

[Stan Hauer] (Steve Oshrin)

Stephen Judd

John Meyer

Greg O'Brien

Bill Powell

Bob Press

[Paula Smithka] (Bill Powell)

Amy Young

College of Business

Scott Magruder

[Catherine Price] (Cheri Becker)

College of Education & Psychology

[Mary Ann Blackwell] (Joe Olmi)

Taralynn Hartsell

Joe Olmi

John Rachal

College of Health

[Wendy Bounds] (Bonnie Harbaugh)

Bonnie Harbaugh

Mary Lux

Steve Oshrin

[Tim Rehner] (Michael Webster)

College of Coastal Science

Chet Rakocinski

Don Redalje

College of Science & Technology

[Jeff Evans] (Bobby Middlebrooks)

[Randy Buchanan] (Myron Henry)

[Jerry Griffith] (Myron Henry)

[John Hannon] (Anita Davis)

Myron Henry

Bobby Middlebrooks

Gail Russell

University Libraries

Mary Beth Applin

Jay Barton Spencer

USM-Gulf Coast

Patsy Anderson

Julie Cwikla

Wil Watson

Members Absent:

College of the Arts & Letters:

College of Business:

Stephen Burshardt

Bill Gunther

College of Education & Psychology:

Tony Rodriguez-Buckingham

College of Health:

College of Coastal Science:

College of Science & Technology:

Charles McCormick

Larry Mead

University Libraries:

USM-Gulf Coast: